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REMARKS

In response to the Final Office Action mailed on December 2, 2004, and in conjunction with the concurrently filed Request for Continued Examination, a copy of which is attached, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration based on the above claim amendments and the following remarks. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance. Claims 1-5, 8, 10-14, and 17-25 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 13, 17, 18, and 21 have been amended. No new matter has been entered.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 8, 10-14, 16, 18, and 21-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,790,633 issued to Kinser et al. (hereinafter "Kinser") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,445,774B1 issued to Kidder et al. (hereinafter "Kidder"). Claims 4, 17, 19, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinser in view of Kidder, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,353,902 to Kulatunge et al. (hereinafter "Kulatunge"). Claims 24 and 25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Kinser in view of Kidder and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,710,648 issued to Frigo or U.S. Patent No. 6,208,776 issued to Prohaska.

Claims 1, 13, 17, and 18 have been amended to recite proactively maintaining a telephone system local loop that includes acquiring status information, the information including engineering information and at least one of customer information, maintenance information, service information, and real-time process information. The engineering information as recited in amended claims 1, 13, 17, and 18 includes government regulations. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, in paragraph [0029] on page 12 of the specification. Claims 1, 13, 17, and 18 are not rendered obvious over Kinser, Kidder, Kulatunge or a combination of Kinser, Kidder, and Kulatunge, because none of Kinser, Kidder, and Kulatunge suggests or teaches these elements. Kinser has been relied upon by the Examiner for teaching predicting proactive maintenance based upon status information. The activities conducted by

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Kinser teach analyzing a telephone line via an Automatic Line Insulation Test (ALIT) performed on the line and determining whether a cable associated with the line may have a potential problem (e.g., failure, leakage) (col. 24, lines 29-34 and lines 49-55). The information acquired as taught by Kinser, Kidder, and Kulatange does not include acquiring status information relating to engineering data, and in particular, governmental regulations associated therewith. For at least this reason, the Applicants submit that claims 1, 13, 17, and 18 are patentable over the cited references. Claims 2, 3-5, 8, 10-12, and 21-25 depend from claim 1. Claim 14 depends from claim 13 and claims 19 and 20 depend from claim 18. Thus, claims 2-5, 8, 10-12, 14, and 19-25 are believed to be allowable at least due to their dependencies on corresponding claims 1, 13, 17, and 18.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, Applicants submit that the above-identified application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification to this effect is respectfully requested.

If there are any charges with respect to this response or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account 06-1130 maintained by Applicants' attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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